



Montgomery County Council

From the Office of Councilmember Marilyn Praisner

For Immediate Release

January 9, 2002

Contact: Joy Nurmi 240-777-7953

As complaints about Comcast service continue to roll in...

PRAISNER CALLS ON COMCAST TO REVERSE ITS CABLE TV RATE INCREASE

Montgomery County Councilmember Marilyn J. Praisner today sent a letter to a top Comcast executive asking the company to reverse its decision to raise rates on its preferred tier of cable service. Comcast recently announced that its monthly rates for Preferred cable television service will increase \$2.33, effective January 2, 2002.

"I was extremely disappointed to learn recently that Comcast has decided to institute another rate increase, the second in nine months, especially following two successive years in which complaints to the County's Cable Office more than doubled and reached the highest level ever," said Praisner.

Complaints to the Montgomery County Cable Office, which is where consumers turn when they feel they have exhausted options with Comcast, peaked in August, totaling 253.

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"The County is now receiving a large number of calls complaining about the rate increase. I cannot help but feel that this rate increase, heaped on top of already strained customer relations, is adding insult to injury," Praisner added.

Montgomery County is precluded by federal law from regulating Comcast's Preferred tier of cable television service. The County regulates Comcast's basic tier of service, installation, and equipment.

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Attached find Councilmember Praisner's letter to Comcast.

January 8, 2002

Ms. Sue Reinhold
Vice President and General Manager
Comcast
20 West Gude Drive
Rockville, MD 20850-1150

Dear Ms. Reinhold:

I was extremely disappointed to learn recently that Comcast has decided to institute another rate increase, the second in nine months. I was especially concerned that these rate increases follow on the heels of two successive years in which complaints to the County's Cable Office more than doubled and reached the highest level ever. August complaints to our Montgomery County Cable Office, which is where consumers turn when they feel they have exhausted options with Comcast, totaled 253. While I understand Comcast has made progress in reducing complaints, many Montgomery County consumers still feel the sting of last year's technical and customer service problems. I cannot help but feel that this rate increase, heaped on top of already strained customer relations, is adding insult to injury.

Already, our County Cable Office is experiencing a significant number of calls complaining about Comcast's latest rate increase. While, as you know, Montgomery County is precluded by Federal law from preventing Comcast from raising its rates on the Preferred Package of cable services, I strongly urge Comcast to reverse its decision to increase its rates. Such an effort by Comcast will go a long way toward building customer trust and goodwill and repairing its relationship with many of its customers.

Sincerely,

Marilyn J. Praisner
Councilmember

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C: Councilmembers